

FORT GIBSON
907 North Garrison Avenue
Fort Gibson
Muskogee
Oklahoma

HALS OK-40
OK-40

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

FORT GIBSON

HALS NO. OK-40

Location: 907 N. Garrison, Fort Gibson, Muskogee County, Oklahoma.
Lat: 35.80365 Long: -95.25742

Significance: Fort Gibson is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a designated National Historic Landmark, an Oklahoma Landmark, and is also an official site on the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. It was built on the western fringe of U.S. settlement in 1824 to maintain peace between dueling Native American tribes and between the tribes and white settlers. During the Native American removal from the southeast in the 1820s, 30s, and 40s, the fort served as a destination point for tribes before they were distributed within Indian Territory (Oklahoma). The fort was also occupied temporarily by Union and troops during the Civil War. The WPA reconstructed part of the fort in 1937.

History: The first military post in what would become the State of Oklahoma, Fort Gibson was named in honor of U.S. Army Commissary General George Gibson. Beginning in 1824, construction on a stockade, barracks, along with other structures was performed by soldiers at a site a few miles north of the intersection of the Grand and Arkansas rivers. Originally built to protect the nation's southwestern border and control feuds between rival Plains Indian tribes, the fort became a destination point during Indian removal along what would become known as the Trail of Tears. During Indian removal, the fort was home to the largest garrison in the nation. It helped maintain the peace among the translocated tribes from the southeast until 1857 when the War Department abandoned the fort and deeded it to the Cherokee Nation. During the Civil War troops once again occupied the site as it served as an outpost for the Union Army. It remained a military post until 1890, when it was again given to the Cherokee Nation. Many of the original structures on the site fell into disrepair, but some original structures remain. In addition, parts of the fort were reconstructed by the WPA in 1937. Today, the site is operated by the Oklahoma Historical Society as the Fort Gibson Historical Site. The fort contains exhibits detailing its history, has live demonstrations, and hosts living history events.

Sources: Agnew, Brad, "Fort Gibson," Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/F/FO033.html> (accessed December 10, 2009).

"Fort Gibson," National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form,
<http://www.ocgi.okstate.edu/shpo/nhrpdfs/66000631.pdf> (accessed December 10,
2009).

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View from inside Fort Gibson (Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office Archives:
<http://www.ocgi.okstate.edu/shpo/NHRPICS/66000631.jpg>, accessed December 10, 2009).



View from inside Fort Gibson (<http://static.panoramio.com/photos/original/12874558.jpg>, accessed December 10, 2009).